

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7315

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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SUBJ: ISRAELI PRESS ON NEGOTIATIONS FOR INTERIM SETTLEMENT WITH EGYPT

JERUSALEM POST (BLITZER) JUNE 29 REPORTS THAT FOLLOWING EGYPT'S REJECTION OF ISRAEL'S LATEST PROPOSALS FOR INTERIM AGREEMENT, US HAS PRESENTED ISRAEL "WITH WHAT AMOUNTS TO AN ULTIMATUM, EITHER TO WITHDRAW

TOTALLY FROM BOTH THE MITLA AND GIDI PASSES, OR TO RISK A SERIOUS POLITICAL CONFRONTATION WITH WASHINGTON."

ALTHOUGH FORD'S MESSAGE TO RABIN WAS NOT SPELLED OUT CRUDELY IN TERMS OF ULTIMATUM OR THREAT, BLITZER REPORTS THAT THIS WAS THE WAY "INFORMED SOURCES" IN WASHINGTON DESCRIBED MESSAGE PRESIDENT FORD GAVE ISRAELI AMBASSADOR DINITZ JUNE 27 TO FORWARD TO JERUSALEM.

ACCORDING BLITZER STORY, PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER ARE CONVINCED THAT CONTINUED ISRAELI REFUSAL TO WITHDRAW FROM PASSES
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IN THEIR ENTIRETY MAKES ANOTHER INTERIM AGREEMENT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE,

AND THEY WILL WAIT ANOTHER TWO WEEKS--THREE AT THE MOST--FOR ISRAEL TO REACH DECISION.

BLITZER REPORTS US MADE IT CLEAR TO DINITZ THAT IF ISRAEL REFUSES, US WILL THEN HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO CALL FOR RECONVENING GENEVA MIDDLE EAST PEACE CONFERENCE. AMERICAN OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT SADAT'S READINESS TO ISSUE STATEMENT PLEDGING NON-USE OF FORCE, PLUS ASSURANCES ACCORD WILL HAVE THREE-FOUR YEAR DURATION, MOSTLY LARGE-SCALE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. EGYPT SAID TO BE PREPARED TO ALLOW DEMILITARIZATION OF MUCH OF AREAS EVACUATED AND TO IMPLEMENT SOME ELEMENTS OF NON-BELLIGERENCY.

US PRESSURING ISRAEL TO ACCEPT EGYPTIAN OFFER SINCE IT IS CONVINCED THAT THE ALTERNATIVE WOULD LEAD TO STALEMATE AND THAT NOT MUCH PROGRESS CAN BE ACHIEVED IN GENEVA.

WASHINGTON SOURCES, REPORTS BLITZER, SAID THAT GOI'S LATEST PROPOSAL INCLUDED WILLINGNESS TO RETURN MORE THAN HALF OF THE PASSES, AND THAT IN EXCHANGE FOR CERTAIN EGYPTIAN CONCESSIONS IT WOULD AGREE TO TOTAL RETURN OF MITLA PASS, AND NEARLY TOTAL RETURN OF GIDI PASS, WANTING ONLY TO RETAIN ITS EARLY WARNING ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE STATIONS THERE.

US, ACCORDING BLITZER STORY, HAS NOW COME TO CONCLUSION THAT EGYPT IS ADOPTING MORE FORTHCOMING STANCE THAN IT DID IN MARCH.

SIMILAR STORIES ON US PRESSURES ON ISRAEL APPEARS IN HAARETZ (MARGALIT) AND DAVAR (BARENA).

IN COMPANION FRONT PAGE PIECE, JERUSALEM POST (LANDAU) REPORTS SEVERAL MINISTERS WILL ASK FOR "REASSESSMENT" OF ISRAEL'S POSITION ON THE PASSES WHEN CABINET MEETS THIS AFTERNOON TO CONSIDER EGYPT'S NEGATIVE REPLY. SOME MINISTERS REPORTEDLY BELIEVE FURTHER CONCESSIONS COULD BE OFFERED BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS ARE ALLOWED TO COLLAPSE OVER THIS KEY ISSUE.

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LANDAU REPORTS GOI "IS MAKING A DETERMINED EFFORT NOT TO BE BROWBEATEN BY THE SUDDEN AND LARGELY UNEXPECTED AMERICAN ULTIMATUM". VITAL DECISION WILL NOT BE HURRIED, SAYS LANDAU.

PM MEETING WITH LIKUD LEADERS BEGIN AND RIMOLT TO INFORM THEM OF EGYPTIAN POSITION.

CABINET DECISION, ACCORDING LANDAU STTORY, LIKELY TO HINGE
ON RABIN'S EVALUATION OF SITUATION. RABIN, CLAIM "SOME CLOSE
OBSERVERS", WILL BE UNWAVERING ON THE PASSES, EVEN AT THE RISK OF
SHOW-DOWN WITH WASHINGTON. OTHERS HOWEVERDISPUTE STEADFASTNESS OF
RABIN'S CURRENT VIEWS.
VELIOTES

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